

A HETEROPHEMIST.

HOW HE INJURED THE FINANCIAL INTERESTS OF THE CONFEDERACY.

Mr. Blank Was Sent to England to Solicit Aid and Failed—The Message He Sent to Mr. Memminger Was the Opposite of What He Supposed.

The Southern Confederacy was only a few months old when a financial agent was sent to England on a very important mission. Mr. Blank was a politician and a banker. He was also an elegant gentleman, with many influential acquaintances on both sides of the water.

Before leaving Richmond, he had a long talk with Mr. Memminger, the secretary of the treasury.

"If I send that England will aid us," he said. "I will send you word by some reliable blockade runner. It will be a very brief message, but you will understand it, while it will mean nothing to the enemy, it should be understood by us."

The confidential agent slipped through the lines, and in less than a month was comfortably established in London. In the metropolis he found many southerners and many prominent Englishmen who sympathized with the secessionists. His new Mr. Yancey, the Confederate minister, every day, and the two worked together in harmony. Mr. Yancey was a practical man and was not averse to coming to the conclusion that no aid was to be expected from the British government.

"The abolition sentiment controls

now," he said to Mr. Blank. "Some of the statesmen would like to help the South in order to break up the Union, but the people will never do it."

"The south will have to fight alone."

Blank feels pretty blue when he hears this, and that night he wrote the single word "success" on this slip of paper and skillfully secreted it in an ordinary coat button. The next day he was visited by a southern friend who remained with him for an hour of talk. During his stay he removed the top button from his coat and sewed on one given by Mr. Yancey.

"I understand it all," he said when he left. "If I get safely to Wilmington, I will go at once to Richmond and give this button to Mr. Memminger. I prefer not to know the nature of the message, as you say that it explains itself."

"Yes," replied Blank, "it will be understood by a secretary, and as it refers to a confidential I cannot say anything about it."

He took two shawls and the coat's man with the precious button took the next train for Liverpool, where he boarded a steamer bound for Wimington.

The steamer was chased by Federal

cruisers, but he managed to reach her destination without any serious mishap.

In the course of two or three days the Northern traveler called on Mr. Memminger in Richmond and presented him with a button. The secretary cut off its covering in a hurry and was glad when he read the word "successful."

"Did Mr. Blank show this message?" he asked.

"No. We both thought it best that I should remain in ignorance so that no telltale expression of my face would betray anything if the enemy captured me."

At a meeting of the cabinet that afternoon Mr. Memminger was in high spirits. He said that the war would be over in 60 days and said that England was preparing to recognize the Confederacy and send over her warships to break the blockade.

"I have this," he said, "from my confidential agent, Mr. Blank."

The name commanded respect, and when the secretary said that under the circumstances a loan of \$15,000,000 had been negotiated in Europe would be sufficient everybody agreed with him. The weeks rolled on, and Erlanger in Paris advertised for bids for \$15,000,000 in Confederate bonds. Mr. Blank read this at his London hotel and dropped his paper in his agitation.

"Well, I'll be d—d!" he remarked. "I made a mistake. I'll run over and see about it."

The next day he was at Erlanger's office in Paris. The French banker informed his visitor that there was no mistake, and then Blank gave vigorously. The bids rushed in from all quarters. If the demands of these speculators had been met, \$50,000,000 in Confederate bonds had been sold.

With this fact became known, Mr. Blank again relapsed into profligacy.

He could not stand it, and despite the danger of the trip, he made his arrangements to return home. His interview with Memminger was a stormy one when he arrived at Richmond.

"I intended to write 'unsuccessful,'" he said after a long talk.

"Well, there is your message," replied the secretary. "You wrote 'successful'."

"I don't understand it," said Mr. Blank sadly. "Surely your advice from Mr. Yancey should have warned you that there was something wrong."

"His dispatches were intercepted," answered the other.

"I don't understand it," repeated Mr. Blank.

"Perhaps I do," quietly remarked the secretary. "I have carefully noted your talk this morning, and I have covered that you are a man of scientific. For instance, you say London when you mean Richmond and Richmond when you mean London. You similarly use the names of other places and persons, and are unconscious of it. When you sent me that message, the word 'unsuccessful' was in your mind, but being a heterophemist, you wrote 'successful' word and ruined the Confederacy in those terms."

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